

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This amendment is respectfully submitted in response to the non-final Office Action dated March 26, 2004.

I. Introduction

Claims 24 and 25 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-23 and 26 are now pending. Claims 21 and 26 have been amended

In the Office Action the Examiner allowed claims 1-20, rejected claims 21-24 and objected to claims 25 and 26 for depending from a rejected base claim. The Examiner indicated that claims 25 and 26 were directed to allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In the Office Action the Examiner also rejected claims 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,583,564 to Rao et al.

In view of the amendment to claim 21, to include the features of allowable claim 25, all of the pending claims are now allowable as will be discussed further below.

**II. All of the Pending Claims, i.e., Claims 1-23 and 26
Are in Condition for Allowance****1. Claims 1-20**

Claims 1-20 stand allowed.

2. Claims 21-23 and 26 Are Allowable

While rejecting independent claim 21 and dependent claims 22-24 were rejected based on prior art, the Examiner indicated that claims 25 and 26 were directed to allowable subject matter. **Claim 21 has been amended to include the features of claim 25. Claim 25 was indicated to be directed to allowable subject matter.** In view of the amendment to claim 21, claims 24 and 25 have been canceled since claim 21 now includes the features previously found in these claims. Claim 26 has been amended to depend from claim 21 instead of claim 25 which has been canceled.

Independent claim 21, as amended, is now directed to the allowable subject matter previously found in claim 25. Accordingly claim 21 is allowable for the reasons the Examiner previously found dependent claim 25 to be allowable. Thus, claim 21 is in condition for allowance as are claims 22-23 and 26 which depend from amended claim 21.


III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner pass this application to issue.

If there are any outstanding issues which need to be resolved to place the application in condition for allowance the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative by phone to discuss and hopefully resolve said issues. To the extent necessary, a petition for extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made, the fee for which should be charged to Patent Office deposit account number 07-2347.

Respectfully submitted,

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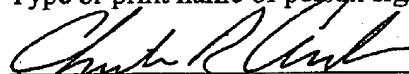
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July 23, 2004

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